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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0322
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE
RUEAHND/COMJTF-B SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUMIAAA/USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 000698

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [MARR](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: HONDURAS COUP SITREP #35 08/04/2009 AS OF
12:00 LOCAL (14:00 EDT)

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 695 AND OTHERS

DEMONSTRATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITY

¶1. (U) Approximately 500 pro-Zelaya protestors began demonstrating in Colonia Kennedy without blocking traffic. As of 10:45, the protestors were demonstrating aggressively, painting cars and marching down Blvd. Suyapa, blocking a lane of traffic. By 12:00, the protest size has grown to 1000 demonstrators and has moved throughout the city, stopping at Ministerio Publico (Public Ministry) and Radio Globo (Note: Radio Globo, generally supportive of Zelaya, has issued a statement claiming that it is being shut down by the defacto regime. We are attempting to confirm. End Note.) Police did not intervene.

¶2. (SBU) On August 3, in protest of de facto regime president Micheletti's visit to San Pedro Sula, 500 pro-Zelaya supporters demonstrated at San Pedro Sula's Multiplaza Mall. Protestors were blocked by police from getting to Micheletti's meeting with local business leaders (septel). Police used tear gas to disperse the protestors and approximately 50 protestors were arrested and briefly detained by Honduran National Police, according to police sources. Human rights organizations claim that five protestors sustained injuries, ranging from three broken bones to two detainees being pistol-whipped by the police. Human rights groups claim that the harshness of police repression is growing, and that many of those arrested are beaten prior to their release. We are also gathering evidence that the police are singling out journalists covering or filming events for particularly harsh beatings.

¶3. (SBU) In Tegucigalpa, the pro-Zelaya movement claims it discovered that it had been infiltrated by an undercover member of the police and a private security firm employee who attempted to take pictures of participants and note their upcoming plans. Special Prosecutor for Human Rights Sandra Ponce issued a statement that protestors must realize that their right to protest has limits when it comes to violence, reminded security forces that their response must

always be proportional, and affirmed that local government may declare a protest illegal if it becomes violent, but must not do so to stymie freedom of expression.

¶4. (SBU) Investigation into the August 2 stabbing death of teacher Martin Florencio Rivera Barrientos indicates Rivera was the victim of common crime. Only hours after his death, the police arrested his neighbor, Jefrey Johan Hernandez, who was identified by eyewitnesses and neighbors as the perpetrator; the two are purported to have had previous disagreements surrounding Hernandez's drug use in the apartment complex.

¶5. (SBU) The Supreme Court agreed to let the cases brought by several pro-Zelaya protestors proceed and named the judges who would review the cases; the protestors claimed that they were wrongly detained after the violent break-up of protests on July 31 in Santa Rosa de Copan and Tegucigalpa. The cases, presented by Zelaya-supporter Andres Pavon (President of the Committee of Human Rights (CODEH)), were against Head of the Armed Forces General Vasquez Velasquez and Security Minister Jorge Rodas Gamero.

¶6. (U) Health workers are expected to go on strike today. Workers will remain inside hospitals and clinics, but will stop working.

¶7. (U) Pro-Zelaya supporters are planning a large demonstration for Tuesday, August 11. The week's notice given for this demonstration is likely due to the

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organizers' hope that in the coming days, large numbers of their supporters will trickle into Tegucigalpa from across the country.

¶8. (SBU) The 12-hour curfew in the zone surrounding the Las Manos border crossing in El Paraiso Department and parts of Choluteca Department remain in place. The curfew for the rest of the country was rescinded July 31. The Embassy Warden Message urges AmCits to consult television and radio announcements each night to determine the correct curfew hours.

Infrastructure and Communications

¶9. (SBU) Toncontin International Airport in Tegucigalpa (TGU) remains open. San Pedro Sula airport remains open with all flights operating as normal.

¶10. (U) Apart from the police and military control of the Las Manos border crossing (Reftel), all other borders remain open and operating as normal.

¶11. (U) There are no reports of abnormal public utility outages in the country.

Consular and Embassy Operations

¶12. (U) The Embassy is open for normal business on Monday, August 4. Barring any changes in the security situation, the Consular Section will remain open for regular consular services until further notice.

¶13. (U) The Consular Section continues to receive sporadic inquiries from AmCits regarding the political situation. Post circulated a Warden Message Wednesday, July 29. The Consular Section continues to regularly update ACS information on the Embassy website.

¶14. (SBU) The next EAC meeting will take place August 5.
LLORENS